

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-05 ICA-20
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3533
INFO AMCONSUL BRISBANE
AMCONSUL MELBOURNE
AMCONSUL PERTH
AMCONSUL SYDNEY
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY VIENNA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
DOE GERMANTOWN
DOE WASHINGTON

UNCLAS CANBERRA 4619

USIAEA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EMIN, ENRG, AS, MNUC, SENV
SUBJ: PARLIAMENT PASSES URANIUM BILLS

REF: A) CANBERRA 4609 (NOTAL); B) STATE 147841 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: ON JUNE 8, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES PASSED THE SIX-BILL URANIUM PACKAGE THAT HAD BEEN PASSED BY THE SENATE ON MAY 29. THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL HAS NOT SIGNED THE BILLS INTO LAW YET. THE SIX BILLS PROVIDE THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK IN WHICH THE
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URANIUM INDUSTRY WILL OPERATE. THE TEXT OF THE BILLS WILL BE ENCLOSED IN AN AIRGRAM. END SUMMARY.

2. ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION (ALLIGATOR RIVERS REGION) BILL 1978: THE BILL ESTABLISHES AN OFFICE OF SUPERVISING SCIENTIST, A COORDINATING COMMITTEE, AND A RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR THE REGION UNDER COMMONWEALTH AUTHORITY IN A WAY THAT RECOGNIZES THE

EXISTING RESPONSIBILITIES OF COMMONWEALTH AND TERRITORIAL AGENCIES IN THE REGION AND THE INTERESTS OF THE NORTHERN LAND COUNCIL AND THE MINING COMPANIES.

3. BILL FOR AN ACT TO AMEND THE NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION ACT 1975: THIS BILL FACILITATES THE DECLARATION OF KAKADU NATIONAL PARK IN THE ALLIGATOR RIVERS REGION. SINCE THE PARK WILL INCLUDE LAND OVER WHICH ABORIGINAL LAND CLAIMS HAVE BEEN, OR WILL BE GRANTED, THE AMENDMENTS PROVIDE FOR THE LEASING OF ABORIGINAL LAND TO THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE TO MANAGE AS A NATIONAL PARK.

4. BILL FOR AN ACT TO AMEND THE ABORIGINAL LAND RIGHTS (NORTHERN TERRITORY) ACT 1976: THE BILL GIVES EFFECT TO THE GOA'S DECISIONS ON THE RANGER URANIUM ENVIRONMENTAL INQUIRY AS FAR AS THEY AFFECT ABORIGINAL LAND RIGHTS. SOME MACHINERY AMENDMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE TO FACILITATE THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE ACT AND TO REMEND DEFECTS WHICH HAVE BEEN FOUND IN THE OPERATION OF THE ACT.

5. BILL FOR AN ACT TO AMEND THE ATOMIC ENERGY ACT 1953: THIS BILL ENABLES THE AUSTRALIAN ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION TO PARTICIPATE ON BEHALF OF THE COMMONWEALTH IN A JOINT VENTURE WITH PEKO-EZ. THIS IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING, WHICH USED THE ATOMIC ENERGY ACT AS ITS LEGISLATIVE BASIS. THE BILL ALSO STRENGTHENS AND CLARIFIES THE LEGISLATIVE UNCLASSIFIED

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BASIS FOR THE APPLICATION OF NUCLEAR SAFEGUARDS WITHIN AUSTRALIA IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY AND AUSTRALIA IN CONNECTION WITH THE TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS. CERTAIN MINOR AMENDMENTS OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE NATURE UPDATE THE ATOMIC ENERGY ACT.

6. ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION (NUCLEAR CODES) BILL 1978 AND SENATE AMADDDMENT:IGHIS BILL ESTABLISHES THE MECHANISMS FOR PROTECTING THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF THE PEOPLE OF AUSTRALIA, AND THE ENVIRONMENT, FROM POSSIBLE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF NUCLEAR ACTIVITES IN AUSTRALIA. THE SENATE AMENDMENT TO THE BILL, PROVIDED THAT THE BILL WOULD APPLY TO INDIVIDUAL STATES ONLY AT THEIR REQUEST.

7. ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION (NORTHERN TERRITORY SUPREME COURT) ACT 1978; THE BILL CONFERS JURISDICTION ON THE SUPREME COURT OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY IN RELATION TO THE ENFORCEMENT BY IT OF CERTAIN LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT IN THE ALLIGATOR RIVERS REGION.
SQUIRE

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